

11: Leakey E-5 (no date) 1930

FL12 Masai FL12

Kenya

THE JOURNAL

000

OF THE

ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

VOL. LX.

PUBLISHED BY THE

Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland,
22, UPPER BEDFORD PLACE, RUSSELL SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.1.

All Rights Reserved.

[Title Page]

SOME NOTES ON THE MASAI OF KENYA COLONY.

By L. S. B. LEAKEY, M.A., F.R.A.I.

000

CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
PREFACE	186	PART V.—Marriage	190
PART I.—Childhood	186	Exogamy	190
Birth	186	Betrothal	190
Naming Ceremony	186	Normal Marriage (of First Wife) ..	200
Tooth Extraction	187	Normal Marriage (of a subsequent Wife)	201
Ear Piercing	187	Forced Marriage	201
Games	187	Marriage of a Virgin	201
Clothing	187	Married Sex Life	202
Food	187	Sex Restrictions	202
PART II.—Boyhood	187	Penalties	202
Herding	187	Marriage Transaction	202
Sex Life	187	PART VI.—Family Life	203
Preparation for Initiation	188	Relation of Parents to Children ..	203
Ceremony of Slaughtering the Ox by the Horns	188	Gifts to Certain Relations	204
Circumcision	189	Mother's Brother	204
Novitiate	190	Widowhood	204
Shaving Ceremony	191	Sickness	204
PART III.—Warriorhood	191	PART VII.—Death and Burial	204
The Age-Group System	191	Death	204
Manynames	192	Burial of Old People	206
Sex Life	192	Ceremony at Burial-place	206
Permanent Loves	194	Inheritance	206
The Kumsa Ceremony	194	Spirit Life	206
The Thingira	195	Curses	206
Shaving Ceremony	196	PART VIII.—Clans	206
Becoming Elders	196	List of Clans and Sub-clans	206
Summary of Warriorhood	197	PART IX.—Cattle and Sheep	206
PART IV.—Girlhood	197	Protecting Lost Cattle	207
Work	197	Driving out Disease	207
Sex Life	197	Preventing Mating	207
Menstruation	198	Blood-letting	208
Conception	198	Meat Feasts	208
Abortion	198	Milking	208
Penalty for Conception	198	Raiding	208
Girls' Initiation	199	PART X.—Miscellaneous Notes	209
Shaving Ceremony	199	Fire	209
		Murder	209
		Smiths	209

PREFACE.

114 In the past very little detailed work on the social life of the Masai has been attempted,
115 since such investigations cannot well be made through interpreters, while few, if any, Europeans speak the Masai language sufficiently fluently to make such an investigation in that language.

[123] Although I cannot claim any knowledge of the language of the Masai, I have been fortunate enough to become friendly with four Masai who speak Kikuyu fluently, and as I speak Kikuyu as well as I do English I was able to learn something from them about their customs.

[124] These notes are of necessity brief and full of lacunae, since I avoided asking direct leading questions, though tempted to do so, and also because they do not include information unless it was obtained from or corroborated by more than one informant.

[101] The Masai from whom this information was obtained came from that part of the Masai Reserve which lies to the west of the Mau Escarpment, and I was not able to find out whether these customs prevailed among the whole of the Masai group.

My two principal informants were an old woman, past child-bearing, and her married son, aged about 35 (I have unfortunately lost the paper with their names).
[648] They were insistent that most of these customs have been slightly modified since
[128] government control has been set up, but I have, notwithstanding, written mainly in the present tense.

PART I.—CHILDHOOD.

844 Birth.—Among the Masai, birth takes place in the woman's own hut in her husband's village and she is attended by an old woman of her husband's family. Other women may be present, but no men. If a woman is having her first child she assumes a stooping position supported by other women, as the first child is considered more difficult to deliver; otherwise a woman giving birth to a child lies upon the bed. The acting midwife cuts the cord with a special instrument,¹ and both the woman and new-born child are washed with warm water. The placenta is carried out and thrown down in the cattle yard, but is not buried. As soon as the child is born its sex is ascertained in order that an animal may be bled to supply blood for the mother to drink. If the child is a boy the blood is obtained from a young bull, and if a girl, from a young heifer. (For method of procuring blood see Part IX.) From the day of birth onwards many sheep and goats are killed to supply meat and fat for the mother in order that the child may grow up strong, but these animals have no special significance, and are not sacrificial or for purification purposes.

553 Naming Ceremony.—Children are not named until they can run about, and unlike
[107] some other East African tribes, the child does not inherit any name from any particular relation.

¹ There is some mystery attaching to the instrument used, and I am not sure what it is.

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.*

187

particular relation. The naming ceremony is as follows:—When the child can run about a small ram is chosen and killed by the women of the village and eaten by them (and not by any men). The child is then given a name which is chosen by the assembled women. It is usually named after some friend of the family either living or deceased, and great care is taken that the person after whom the child is named is (or was) good-looking and of good character, as otherwise the child would grow up ugly and of an evil nature. This is the name used by the family and by friends, but after initiation a boy is always called "Son of 'so-and-so,'" and not by his own name (except by his family). After a man is married and has named sons of his own he is called "Father of 'so-and-so.'" 553 551

Teeth Extraction.—As soon as a child of either sex has cut all its milk-teeth the two central lower incisors are knocked out, and this operation is repeated when the permanent teeth grow. There is no ceremony attached to this removal of the teeth, which is performed with a small, sharp two-edged knife. The reason given for this practice is, that in the case of any illness, if the patient keeps his mouth tightly closed, water and gruel can be poured in through the hole so formed. 304 [852] [412] [758]

Ear Piercing.—At the age of about 6 or 7, children of both sexes have holes pierced in the cartilage round the upper part of the ear, and as soon as the boys start herding cattle and the girls start drawing water they have the lobes of the ears pierced. Ears are pierced in order to prepare them for carrying ornaments, and the holes are stretched to the size which the individual requires by means of a gradual increase in the size of the inserted stretching plug of rough wood.

Games.—All sorts of childish games are played by the children during their early days, but I could not obtain any details from my informants. 524

Clothing.—From a very early age children are given small bits of skin as clothing, and the boys have small sandals made for them. 291

Food.—The food of children is the same as that of grown-ups and is restricted to milk, fat, and meat, as no crops are grown. 262

PART II.—BOYHOOD.

Herding.—As soon as they are considered old enough (and this depends upon the number of other boys in the family available for this work), boys are sent to help herd the sheep and cattle, and they continue to do so until they are old enough to start preparing for initiation. 857

Sex Life.—Initiation is often delayed until some little time after puberty, and it is not considered in any way wrong for these boys to begin indulging sexually as soon as they like, provided that they observe certain restrictions. They may do as they like with the younger girls in the neighbouring villages, provided, of course, that they observe the law forbidding sexual relations with any member of their own sub-clan, 836 883 684 [834]

836 and also provided they avoid such young girls as are attached to men in the warrior
883 classes. That these young uninitiated lads even try to have intercourse with married
684 women is certain, as there is a special penalty provided for women who so debase
834 themselves. (See Marriage.)

881 *Preparation for Initiation.*—No boy is allowed to think about preparing for
561 initiation until he can show a growth of facial hair indicating puberty. Boys are
always very anxious to be initiated as soon as possible, and as soon as they consider
that they can make a reasonable claim that they are old enough, they form themselves
into groups of anything from six to a dozen, dress themselves in new calf-skins,
and, taking with them bows and arrows, go out on a tour of all the villages of the
district announcing that they are candidates for initiation and demanding presents.
These groups are called *olamal*, and by long custom they must be given anything
they ask for which is within reason.

[831] Custom dictates that they shall ask especially for honey and hyrax-skin karosses,
and these they take and present to senior and influential elders belonging to various
circumcision groups, at the same time requesting them to bring up the question of
their initiation at the councils, and to make all the necessary arrangements. There is
often a delay of anything from six months to a year before the consent of the councils
is obtained and arrangements are set on foot. In the meantime the groups of boys
continue on their visiting tours collecting more presents as further persuasion to the
elders to do as requested, and fresh groups of boys are formed and add themselves to
the number of the candidates for initiation.

[836] During the whole time that these *olamal* groups are wandering about from village
to village they may sleep with any of the uninitiated girls in the villages which they
visit (even those who are attached to young warriors), provided that they observe
the normal restrictions of the warrior classes.

[14] *Ceremony of Seizing the Ox by the Horns.*—When at length the elders have con-
sented to proceed with the initiation ceremonies, those elders to whom the presents of
honey and hyrax-skins were given make the necessary arrangements for the ceremony
of seizing the horns of the black ox. These elders select a village of some elder of the
Lukumai sub-clan (the ox must always be supplied by a member of this sub-clan),
and demand a black ox without any defect and without any trace of other colour on
any part of its body. Should the owner of the selected village not possess such an
ox he must obtain one from another member of the Lukumai sub-clan, and if he
cannot do so he must obtain it from another clan by purchase or exchange, and present
it to the elders. This ox is called *ovegetag*.

When the ox has been procured, a special village is built near where the ox was
obtained, and a day is fixed for the horn-seizing ceremony. Only those of the
candidates for initiation whose fathers took part in a horn-seizing ceremony are
allowed to take part; the rest of the candidates cannot do so, but stay at their
homes while the ceremony takes place.

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.* 189

Those candidates who are eligible to take part in the ceremony assemble on the day fixed for the proceedings. They come from all parts of the Masai country, north, south, east, and west, as there is only one ox-seizing ceremony in the whole of Masai country before a new age-group proceeds to initiation and circumcision. They wear ordinary everyday dress and carry sticks. The ox is brought into the village by the elders in charge of the ceremony, and the boys are lined up some distance away. A signal is given, and immediately the boys race to the ox, each boy endeavouring to get a firm grip of the ox's horns or of the hump. As soon as two boys have succeeded in gripping these parts firmly, all those boys of the same clan protect him with their sticks, while all the others endeavour to force the boys to release their grip. Should they do so and should boys of another clan succeed in taking their place, they in their turn are attacked by the other clans and defended by their own. After a time the elders stop the contest, and those who succeeded in keeping their grip are greatly lauded. The two boys who actually held the horns and hump respectively will be renowned for their success for the rest of their lives. It is a recognised thing that during the contest very many individuals receive more or less serious wounds. [88] [56] [484] [614]

As soon as the contest has been stopped, the ox is slaughtered and eaten by all present at the ceremony, and the hide is cut up into small strips, in each of which a hole is cut, and a strip put as a ring on the middle finger of the right hand of each of the boys who participated in the contest. If any skin remains over after each boy has been thus decorated, it is cut into a long thin thong, which is given to a boy candidate of the Lukumai sub-clan (i.e. the sub-clan who provided the ox). This boy is called *oloboloi elgeteng*. This thong must never be lost or parted with, but the small strips of skin placed on the boys' fingers must be removed a day or two later and thrown down in that part of the boy's mother's house where the calves sleep. [30] [230] [614]

When this ceremony is over the boys go to their own homes to await their turn for circumcision.

Circumcision.—The candidates are not circumcised in groups at local centres, but individually at their own homes, and as the number of operators is limited, candidates may have to wait for anything up to two years before their turn comes. The operators travel from district to district, visiting all the villages where there are candidates, and circumcising them at their own homes. During the interval between the end of the ox-seizing ceremony (before which none of the candidates may be circumcised) and the time when his turn to be circumcised arrives, each boy goes back to his cattle-herding and carries on with the normal routine life of an uninitiated boy. [88]

The operators who circumcise the boys are never true Masai, but invariably "Wandorobo" living in Masai country, but no explanation of this could be obtained except that it had always been so from the beginning. [563]

881 As only those candidates who belong to a given village may be operated on in that village, it is seldom that there is more than one circumcised at a time, but should there be two or three candidates belonging to a single village they would be circumcised together on the same day at the same time. There is no elaborate ceremonial accompanying the operation or preparatory to it. A boy will continue herding his cattle until the late afternoon of the day before that fixed for his circumcision. He is then fetched back to the village and has his hair shaved off by his mother, and has new sandals and a new skin dress given to him. This dress must be made of the skins of four rams sewn together, and will be worn the following day during the operation. The actual operation takes place next day, either early in the morning or in the middle of the day. If it is in the morning, the cattle are kept in the yard until the ceremony is over, but if it is in the middle of the day the cattle must be brought into the yard and kept there during the ceremony, for it is absolutely essential that the cattle shall be in their enclosure during the whole of the ceremony. Sheep and goats are not included in this rule. The boy (or boys) sits on an ox-skin in the courtyard in front of his mother's hut wearing his new ram-skin dress and sandals, and the operator performs the operation with a special small knife without any elaborate ceremonial. The boy then retires to his hut to convalesce. A fat ram is killed for the patient, who is fed on meat boiled in fat and on plain cold fat, "so that he may get well quickly." After about five or six days the other boys in the district who have already been circumcised and have recovered, call for the boy, and he joins their band for the period of their novitiate.

881 The Novitiates.—The period of novitiate varies in length of time, as a boy must remain in the novice stage from the time that he is circumcised until every other candidate has been circumcised too. Usually a period of about two years elapses between the time of the bull-seizing ceremony and the time when the last candidate has been operated upon. Then the group undergoes the hair-shaving ceremony which marks their transfer from the novice stage to the warrior stage; thus, the last few to be circumcised may only have a few weeks in the novice stage, while others may be about two years in that stage. During the novitiate, there are certain rules and regulations which must be observed by the novices. They wander about the country in bands armed with bows and bird-arrows visiting more especially those villages where they hear that fresh candidates have just been circumcised, and enlisting them in their groups. During the whole novitiate period the novices must not cut their hair at all, nor may they indulge in any form of sexual intercourse, nor may they use red ochre, but only plain fat on their bodies. They are required to shoot as many birds as they can, and to skin them and stuff them roughly with grass, and tie them to their hair as a decoration. More and more skins are added to this head-dress as the weeks go by, until at length a boy has a complete wig of stuffed bird skins. Certain birds must on no account be so used notably birds such as pigeons, doves, and

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.*

191

francolin. These bird skins, once fixed to the hair of the head, may not be removed until the general hair-shaving ceremony, when the hair of each novice is shaved off with the skins attached. During the period of the novitiate the boys are known as *leibartan* and are free to go anywhere "like women," and, in fact, may even visit the *manyattas* or warrior villages of the existing warrior groups with impunity.

There are special dances, called *oringoulen*, which are danced by the novices alone.

The Shaving Ceremony.—When at length all the candidates have reached the novice stage, the shaving ceremony, which marks the end of the novitiate, takes place. For this ceremony the novices are assembled in territorial groups, and each boy has his hair publicly shaved off by his mother (or in the event of his mother being dead, by another of his father's wives). This shaving ceremony is accompanied by the killing of a ram for each novice, after which his father presents him with a spear, shield, sword and knobkerrie, which are the insignia of his new status as a warrior.

The new warriors now form themselves into groups, and organize the building of villages, which will be their headquarters. These villages are the *manyattas* of the warrior groups (see below).

PART III.—WARRIORHOOD.

The Age-Group System.—The general word denoting an age-group is *uriniuri*, and this word is liable to cause considerable confusion unless very great care is taken, as it denotes in a general way several widely different forms of age-groups. All those warriors who pass from the novice stage to the warrior stage at the same time—in fact, all those boys circumcised between a single ox-seizing ceremony and the succeeding hair-shaving ceremony—are grouped as members of a single age-group which is given a name which lasts for life. Besides this permanent name, however, the age-groups during the warrior stage are known by the alternating names of *jangienobur* and *murategediengye*.

There may never be more than three age-groups in the warrior class at the same time; and also, a group with the name of *jangienobur* must always be the senior warrior group. This, in effect, means that a single age-group cannot be transferred from the warrior class to the elders' class, but that two groups, a *jangienobur* and a *murategediengye*, must move out together, leaving the next *jangienobur* as senior age-group in the warrior class, and temporarily the only age-group in the class. As soon as the two senior groups have moved out together, the next group, already in the novice stage, transfers into the warrior class with the name of *murategediengye*, and in due course yet a third group will be initiated and enter the age-group as *jangienobur*, after which no further transfer of a novice group can take

881
561

[535]

881
561
302

[431]
[411]
[014]

561
701
361

561

561

56
62
59
36
634

621
561

836
561

601
832
071

Before dealing with the subsequent procedure, after a girl has promised to visit a warrior on a given night, it is necessary to outline the sleeping arrangements and accommodation in a *maspitta* hut. The hut is not divided off into rooms in any way, and at one end of the hut is the bed upon which the woman (mother of one of the warriors) to whom the hut belongs, sleeps with her younger children. At the other end of the hut, not screened off in any way, is the bed upon which the warriors and girls sleep. No warrior may ever sleep upon the married woman's bed, but the woman's husband can come down and visit her whenever he likes, and when he does so, no warriors or girls may sleep in the hut. Ordinarily, however, the woman's husband does not live at the *maspitta*, and she and her small children sleep on her bed at the one end of the hut, while the warriors sleep on the bed at the other end of the hut with the girls. No warrior ever sleeps in his own father's hut, but always in one of the other huts if he has invited a girl to sleep that night with him. When, therefore, he has arranged for a girl to visit him at night he goes in the evening to one of the other huts and arranges to sleep on the young people's bed there. He then sends a message by the woman who owns the hut to tell the girl that he is sleeping there so that she may come to him. There is absolutely no objection to several men coming in this way to the same hut, and sleeping on the same big bed each accompanied by his girl. In fact, it is considered wrong for a warrior and a girl to have sexual intercourse unless there are also other couples sleeping on the same bed. Moreover, besides those men who have come to the hut and sent for their girls to join them there, there are usually several younger girls, daughters of the woman who owns the hut, sleeping on the bed too. These young girls, too young as yet to sleep with the men sexually, nevertheless, sleep on the same bed as the warriors and older girls, and thus grow up steeped in the customs of the *maspitta*.

It is exceptionally difficult for a European to understand all the full details and facts concerning native sex life, but the following facts have been noted and verified for the Masai. No girl may sleep with a man except she be absolutely nude, but on the other hand, although by tradition and by etiquette she may not refuse an invitation to sleep with a man (except for the two reasons already given above), she is not necessarily expected to allow him full sexual intercourse, and, in fact, often does not do so. Thus—strange as it may seem—Masai girls do sometimes go to their husbands as virgins in the physical sense of the word (see Marriage), although they may have slept with men in the *maspitta* countless times. Usually, however, Masai girls have no objection to full intercourse except during the first four or five days after each menstrual period (see Girlhood), for the Masai firmly believe that conception cannot occur unless intercourse takes place very soon after menstruation, and four to five days is considered an absolutely safe margin. Moreover, this belief seems to have a strong foundation in fact, and it thus raises a very interesting point for physiologists as to whether this is as true of primitive peoples as it

836 is of animals. It is apparently this fact which explains why there are so
842 few cases of uninitiated girls conceiving despite the Manyatta sexual organization.
561 My informants insist that cases of conception only occur when a girl has been
persuaded by a man to have full intercourse just after her menstruation. It is
quite easy for a girl to see to it that she does not have full intercourse if she does not
want it, since there are always at least two other couples sleeping on the same bed,
and there is also always a married woman in the same hut to see to it that no
force is used by the men.

(For details of procedure should an uninitiated girl conceive, see Girlhood.)

836 Permanent Lovers.—Besides the casual day-to-day lovers described above,
561 a girl very often has a more permanent lover in the manyatta in which she lives,
chosen from among the ranks of those who have been her casual lovers. The actual
836 choosing ceremony takes place in public, but the choice is usually made privately
584 beforehand. This permanent lover in some cases will eventually be the girl's
561 husband, but this is not usual, as nearly every Masai girl is betrothed during
childhood (see Marriage), and usually girls are quite content to marry those to whom
they were thus betrothed. Should a girl be unwilling to marry the man to whom
she is betrothed she usually contrives to become pregnant by her "permanent
lover" and to persuade him to marry her (see Girlhood).

836 The actual ceremony of selecting a "permanent lover" takes place as a public
561 affair. A group of the warriors, including the man, collect together and one of
the man's friends then summons the girl and hands her a spear, and she is told
to go and give it to the man she chooses as "permanent lover." Having thus been
publicly accepted, the warrior from then on becomes responsible for supplying the
girl with such ornaments and necklaces as she may need from time to time, and
he also gives her a special necklace to be worn as a token. After this ceremony
she continues as before to sleep with any of the warriors who may ask her to do
so in the way detailed above (see Sex Life). Equally the man may sleep with any
of the other girls, but the girl and her "permanent lover" can arrange to sleep
together without adopting the usual formula and procedure.

561 The *Eweto* Ceremony.—After nine years of Junior Warriorhood a big cere-
[1884] mony called *Eweto* takes place, at which all the members of a given group
from the whole of the Masai country, north, south, east, and west, are required
to be present. This ceremony marks their rise from Junior to Senior Warriorhood.
During the whole of the nine years of Junior Warriorhood they have not been
[300] allowed to shave their heads at all, but their hair has been gradually tied and
trained into a long pigtail at the back of the head, which is the sign of Junior
Warriorhood. (The only exception to this rule of not shaving the head during
Junior Warriorhood is in case of severe illness, when the head may be shaved if so
desired.)

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.*

196

When the time for the ceremony arrives, a very big village is built called *56*
omunde, and all the members of that age-grade which is to be transferred from the
Junior to the Senior Warriorhood stage assemble here with their friends and relations.
The warriors concerned all dress up in their very best finery, and lion skins especially
are in great demand; and for nine days they dance a special dance called *Kaidish* [535]
of *murra*. During the whole nine days of dancing a very great number of cattle [694]
are slaughtered, and there is great feasting and beer-drinking, but neither the
dancing nor the feasting are the important part of the ceremony; they are merely
incidental, centred around the *thiopia*.

The Thiopia.—Away from the main village an enormous hut has been *56*
built which will accommodate anything up to four hundred men at a time. It is *34*
said to be round in plan, to have a pointed roof, and to take very many days to
build. There are no partitions inside it, but in the centre is dug a circular pit.
Outside the hut is a thorn fence with only one entrance. This hut is called *thiopia* [92]
(a word which has been borrowed by the neighbouring Kikuyu and applied to
ordinary bachelor huts), and is the centre of the whole of the *Junior* ceremony.
During the whole of the nine days of the ceremony this *thiopia* is used as a
"club-house" by the men of the age-group concerned with the ceremony, but
there are certain restrictions, and it is these restrictions which give the key to the
meaning of the whole ceremony. It is considered both ignominious and dishonourable
for any man in the warrior groups—and more especially the junior warrior groups—to
have any sexual relations with any but the initiated girls, but, of course, *834*
sex does occur either openly (see *Forced Marriage*) or in private. Now all members of
the age-group concerned must be present at the *Senior* ceremony, but only
those who have strictly observed the above regulation and have never had sexual
relations with an initiated girl or married woman may enter the *thiopia*. In
order that no one may do so under false pretences the entrance to the *thiopia* is [754]
bewitched by the elders, so that if anyone illegible enters he will surely die.

The *thiopia* is not big enough for all the warriors concerned to use it simulta-
neously, and each day for the nine days there is a public ceremony when the
various individual territorial groups are expected to enter. For the ceremony
all the friends and relations of those who are expected to enter collect round the
entrance and each individual as he enters is greeted with applause, or is
shouted by entering that he has not dishonoured himself or his family. Those warriors
who dare not enter try to sneak away unobserved, for they are disgraced. Inside
the hut—as mentioned—is a large hole which is used as a coupole, in which the
men who enter the hut must urinate. This coupole is also bewitched as an extra
protection, and anyone who has falsely entered and avoided the witchcraft of the
entrance will certainly die upon urinating in the hole. All those who enter the
thiopia on any given day during the ceremony sleep there that night, and also
have milk and meat brought them for food, and oil and tallow for lamps. During

561 the nine days the elders in charge of the ceremony go about looking out for two
346 warriors from the group noted for their humility and honesty, and having selected
them they keep their names very quiet, as the position for which they are being
chosen is not at all sought after. In fact, as soon as the selection has been made,
the relations of the two men chosen are heavily bribed in order that they shall
allow them to be appointed.

561 Shaving Ceremony.—On the tenth day of the ceremony the heads of all the
604 warriors of the age-group are shaved, and during the shaving the elders come and
[302] point out the two warriors whom they have chosen, and publicly proclaim them as the
heads of the group during its time in the senior warrior stage. These two men are
called respectively *olthant* and *olthorungene*, and there are certain very strict
regulations and restrictions attached to their position, the breaking of which would
result in punishment by death; hence the unwillingness of the warriors to be
chosen for these appointments, and the bribing of their relations. Unfortunately,
no information about the duties of these two, or of the restrictions which they
must observe under penalty of death, could be obtained from my informants. After
561 the shaving ceremony is over and these two have been appointed, the warriors go
back to their normal life; but before doing so they first go all together for a few
nights to a new village built for the purpose called *apung'ogoriki*, and from there
[361] they scatter to their own districts. They may not, however, return to their old
wasapitia, which they vacated when they came to the *Ewate* ceremony, but
must build new *wasapitia*.

Becoming Elders.—The length of time spent in the senior warrior class depends
entirely upon whether a man belongs to an age-group called *japimander* or *wasapimander*
(see the Age-group system). Transfer from the senior warrior stage to the
Elders' stage takes place as a group transfer, but one age-group cannot transfer
alone, but always two groups, a *japimander* and a *wasapimander*, must transfer
together. No transfer, therefore, can take place until there are two age-groups in
the warrior stage who have gone through the *Ewate* ceremony. Once there are
two such groups in the senior stage the actual time of transfer is dictated by whether
or not there is a new age-group waiting in the senior stage ready to move up into
the junior warrior stage, for as stated above (see the Age-group system), there may
never be more than three age-groups in the warrior stage at one time. Equally no
two warrior groups may move out into the Elders' stage until there is a new age-
group in the senior stage, as otherwise it would mean leaving a single age-group
alone in the warrior stage for too long, and this would be a serious thing when only
the warrior groups are the fighting force of the tribe. The actual transfer from the
senior warrior stage to the Elders' stage takes place without any ceremonial, and the
[591] men just leave their *wasapitia* and go and live with their wives, with whom as yet
they have never lived, although the wives may be mothers with several children
(see Marriages).

Summary of Warriorhood.

From boyhood upwards to the Elders' stage there are the following recognized steps, each with appropriate "rites de passage," except in the last stage. 54

- (1) *Candidate Stage*.—After the boys have attained puberty, as shown by the first signs of hair growth on the face, they become bands who wander about the country receiving presents, and finally there is the horn-raising ceremony, after which the candidates are circumcised and enter the novice stage. [80]
- (2) *Novice Stage*.—No sex life is permitted to novices, who during their novitiate wander about with bows and arrows shooting birds for head-dresses. This stage is concluded by a head-shaving ceremony, after which the novices enter full warriorhood.
- (3) *Juvenile Warrior Stage*.—This is a period of roughly nine years from the end of the novitiate. During this time—with certain exceptions—an warrior may shave the hair off his head. Life is in the *uapgetta*. This period is concluded by the *Ereata* ceremony and a general head-shaving which marks the entry into the senior warrior stage.
- (4) *Senior Warrior Stage*.—Warriors remain in this class until there are two age-groups in it, and then transfer to the Elders' group. Transfer from the senior warrior stage to the Elders' stage cannot take place unless there are two age-groups ready to move up together.

PART IV.—CHILDREN.

Work.—As soon as girls are old enough to do so, at the age of about seven, they start helping their mothers and sisters in the general work of the village, sweeping out the huts, milking the cows, carrying the children, drawing water and sewing skins. There is, however, one sort of work which is never done by any uninitiated girl, and that is getting firewood. This work is specially reserved for married women. The girls' work may either be in the home village or else in a warrior's *uapgetta*, should they have brothers living in a *uapgetta*. 957

Sex Life.—From a very early age indeed the young girls imitate the general atmosphere of Masai sex life. As already mentioned, those of them who have brothers living in the *uapgetta* sleep from a very early age—long before puberty—on the same beds as couples indulging in sexual intercourse; and even those girls who live in the home village learn all about such matters at a very early age owing to the fact that they always sleep on their mother's bed. As soon as ever the first signs of puberty are noticeable, girls may be asked by the warriors to sleep with them, and the question of whether there is complete intercourse or not rests then entirely with the girls. However, the uninitiated boys, and especially those who tour the villages as candidates for initiation, expect any young girls who are not already 813 814

833 attached to the women to sleep with them. In fact, we may say that for the girls
834 are life starts before puberty and continues (with no such period of moral prohibition
as the boys have during the earlier stage) until they are initiated. There is no
834) important prohibition, however, as far as the girls are concerned, and that is that
moral intercourse with married men is entirely prohibited before initiation, and is
considered a very serious offense.

841 *Menstruation.*—Menstruation is not looked upon as causing uncleanness, and
there are no special rules and regulations attached to this condition, but, on the other
hand, during the actual menstrual period a girl should refuse all invitations to
sleep with men or boys. There is no restriction of work during the menstrual
841) period as there is among some Hindu tribes, but a girl or woman must work for
herself before asking if she is menstruating.

842- *Conception.*—There is a general belief (as already mentioned) that conception
can only take place if there has been full moral intercourse during the five or six
days immediately following the menstrual period, and although there is no special
teaching about this, girls grow up with this knowledge and take care not to allow full
intercourse during the few days immediately following menstruation. Occasionally,
of course, a girl does allow moral intercourse at this time, either because she is
carried away by moral desire, or because she deliberately wishes to conceive for
some reason or another (see Warrickland). In the former case she will try to
bring about abortion.

847 *Abortion.*—If a girl finds that she has conceived and wishes to induce abortion
she sends for the man whom she considers responsible and tells him about it, and he is
bound to help her.

As long as her condition has not been discovered by her parents she may try
to induce abortion, but as soon as her condition is known to her parents she must
no longer try to do so. Abortion is brought about by means of a stick of special
wood which can only be obtained from a medicine man. This stick is inserted into
the vaginal passage and is said to be an absolutely certain abortifacient. This is the
only method used.

847) *Provision for Conception.*—If an uninitiated girl conceives and her condition
becomes known she must immediately be initiated. In the normal way (see before)
her initiation would take place at her mother's house and the necessary arrangements
would be made by her father, but if she is to be initiated because she is with child
the case of all the arrangements is shifted as to the man who is responsible for the
girl's condition, and the necessary *puja* takes place at the man's village. This does
not, however, mean that the man will have to marry her because of this, but he
may do so should both parties desire it. Not only must the man arrange for her
initiation and pay all the costs of the ceremony, but he must also give her father
and a quantity of beer to the girl's father, "because he has provided the father

L. E. B. LAMBERT.—Some Facts on the Moral of Kings College. 128

from having the honour of the first of her initiation." Should the man desire to marry the girl, this letter is treated as one of those which must be burned and for the marriage transaction (see Marriage).

Girl's Initiation.—Among the Mand girls are initiated singly and not in groups, not are they initiated until a good many years after puberty, for as soon as a girl is initiated she must be married, and even to have any intercourse with the natives is legal. Except under the circumstances described above, a girl is not initiated until her parents begin to dream to a married union. As soon as this is ascertainable, her mother informs the father, who makes the necessary arrangements. If the girl's mother is living at the time of a marriage with one of her sons, then the girl's initiation will take place at the marriage, otherwise it will take place at the house of the father. The essential point is that initiation must take place in the mother's hut (or in the hut of another of her father's wives, should her own mother be dead). The father comes to the place where the day of the ceremony has been fixed and here is proposed. A man called *shidjajaka* is designated either before the actual operation or just after it. This is the "man for shidjajaka," and is supposed to insure fertility. This man is seen by all those present at the ceremony. The actual operation is performed by an old woman, who is a skilled operator (she may be either a Mand or a Dinka), and the girl sits on a skin inside the hut during the operation. The operation is said to be the same as that used by the Ethiopians on their girls, and this is a form of disfigurement, but exact details must be obtained from the man. As soon as the operation is over the operator makes the girl to "dream her at the Mand camp" and a man is then designated and given to the operator. This man is called *shidjaka*. That a man is killed called *shidjaka* to provide meat and fat for the girl during convalescence.

Marriage Ceremony.—Finally after the girl is initiated and before she can go to her husband's village, a man is killed called *shidjaka*, which is the "man for the marriage," and at the same time the girl's head is shaved by her mother.

Part V.—MARRIAGE

Engage.—Marriage is always engagement as far as relations are concerned, but marriage within the tribe does not follow. This rule not only applies to marriage but to all forms of sexual intercourse. In fact, whether as a boy, warrior, or a married man, may at any time have sexual intercourse with any woman, girl or child of his own tribe. This is the strictest rule of all Mand law regulations, and the penalty for any breach of this rule is very severe indeed (see below).

A woman remains a member of her own tribe even after marriage, but her children belong to the tribe of her husband.

Abolished.—Among the Mand there are two usual methods of betrothal:—

- (1) Betrothal of native children.
- (2) Betrothal of native girls.

280 L. S. B. LEWIS.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.*

524 The method of betrothing an unborn child is as follows:—A man or boy wishing to do so make a pregnant woman (provided, of course, that her husband is not of his own sub-tribe), and go to her and assist her on the stomach either with fat or with red ochre mixed with butter oil. By so doing he pledges that if the child born is a girl he will eventually marry her. Should the child be a boy he is bound to it in friendship for life. In the event of the child being a girl he must, from birth onwards, present the child with small gifts from time to time, and as the girl grows up supply her with such necklaces or ornaments as she may demand from him. A man or boy wishing to betroth himself to an infant girl does so simply by giving the child a necklace, and from then on he must supply her with such ornaments as she may require. Of course, a man must first of all ascertain that the child—whether unborn or an infant—is not already betrothed. A man may cancel a betrothal if he wishes to do so (but he cannot break his pledge of friendship with a boy in the case of a boy being born to a woman whom he assisted when she was pregnant), and the father of a girl may cancel betrothal by refusing to drink any more of the suitor's beer. If a girl, as she grows up, decides that she does not wish to marry the man to whom she is betrothed, she can easily avoid doing so by arranging with one of her lovers to have intercourse with her just after menstruation, and thereby ensuring that she then has the option of marrying this lover should he be willing.

525 *Second Marriages (or a First Wife).—*It is clear from the above description of betrothal that it is unlikely that a girl will reach her time for initiation unbetrothed. Should she do so by any chance, her father would at once make every effort to find her a husband, probably from among the older men who already have several wives. Nor would the girl object in any way, for to be initiated and not be married directly afterwards would make her the laughing stock of all the neighbourhood. When a girl is to be the first wife of a man, it usually means that her husband-to-be is still a member of a warrior group. This, of course, means that he cannot in the normal way live with his wife for some time. This fact, however, in no way interferes with the marriage ceremony and transaction, the presence of the husband not being considered in any way necessary.

(526) The respective fathers of the girl and of the man make all the arrangements and transactions when the girl is initiated (see below), and as soon as these have been concluded, and the girl has returned from the operation and been through the clearing ceremony, she goes to the village of her husband's family, where she has already built herself a hut (or had it built for her by her friends).

As a married woman her main duty in life now is to bear children, just as it was her duty before initiation to avoid conception. If her husband is still in the warrior class and away, therefore, not have any sexual intercourse with her, this is no hindrance (527) to her in performing this duty, as she may now have intercourse with any married man of sub-tribe other than her own.

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.

201

Moreover, there will be no lack of married men willing to be the physical father of her children, since no married men may have intercourse with unmarried girls, nor yet with their own wife or wives if with child.

Married women make a point of having intercourse immediately after menstruation in order to "get a child." All children born to a woman who is married are considered to be the children of her husband, no matter who their actual father may be. Owing to this system it may happen that by the time a man leaves the warrior stage and passes into the Elders' stage, and goes to live with his wife, he may find that she already has one or more children.

Normal Marriage (of a subsequent Wife).—In the case of a girl marrying a man who already has one or more wives, she simply goes to his village—where she has either already built a hut or had it built for her—as soon as the shaving ceremony is over after her initiation. She then lives with him in the normal way and he will probably be the physical father of her children, although not necessarily so, as she is permitted to have lovers if she wishes it, provided they are married men.

Forced Marriage.—It occasionally happens that the father of a man who is still in the warrior class decides for some reason or another that he wishes to have his son at home—wishes, in fact, that his son should leave the warrior stage before the age-group to which he belongs is due to move up to the Elders' stage on name. In such a case he waits until the girl to whom his son is betrothed has been initiated and is ready for marriage (or even arranges for her initiation to be hastened) and then proceeds as follows. The marriage transaction having been completed and the girl's new hut built in the village, he sends for the girl and secludes her in the hut. He then arranges with some of the young men of the same age-group as his son to bring the youth to the village on some pretext or other. The usual pretext is that of going to the village to ask for a bullock for a meat feast (see Part IX). As soon as the village is reached these young men together with some older men seize the man and carry him forcibly to the girl's hut. The girl is alone in the hut; not even her mother may be present when the man is brought in. The two—man and girl—are forcibly held together so that their bodies touch. Once his body has touched hers (an initiated girl) in the presence of witnesses he cannot go back to the warrior group, and so has to remain and reconcile himself to premature married life with its restrictions.

Marriage of a Virgin.—There is a very curious custom connected with the marriage of a girl who is a virgin in the physical sense of the word, i.e. of a girl whose hymen has never been penetrated. Should a girl's husband find that his wife has come to him in this condition, he must send her back to her father's village the next morning carrying on her back a milk gourd without its stopper. This is a sign to her father that she went to her husband as a virgin, and her father must send her back to her husband with a gift in the form of a heifer as compensation to the husband. The husband may not himself perforate the hymen until this heifer has been received.

202 L. S. B. LEAKEY.—Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.

585
837 *Married Sex Life.*—Among the Masai (as already stated) a married woman's first duty to her husband is to bear him children, and husbands do not mind if their wives have intercourse with other men, provided that they do not do so actually at a time when their husbands want them themselves. Even in such a case—apart from private measures which a husband might take—there is no recognized punishment for the woman, or any legal claim against the man, provided, of course, he is a married man of a sub-class other than the woman's own.

838 *Sex Restrictions.*—There are, of course, certain definite regulations which must be observed, the chief of which are:—

- (1) No woman may have intercourse while she is with child (not even with her husband).
- (2) No woman may have intercourse during the actual period of menstruation.
- (3) No married woman may have intercourse with an uninitiated boy.
- (4) No man in the warrior class may have intercourse with a married woman.
- (5) No married man may have intercourse with an uninitiated girl.
- (6) No woman may have intercourse with a man who is the son of any member of her husband's own age-group ("They are as his own sons, whatever their class may be").
- (7) As already mentioned, the rule of sub-class company applies as much to general sex life as it does to marriage and, therefore, a woman must avoid all men of her own sub-class.

684 **PUNISHMENT FOR BREACHES OF THE ABOVE RESTRICTIONS.**

Breach of No. 1.—There is no fixed punishment for a breach of this regulation, but the man would be accused of causing damage to the child, and should abortion take place later, or the child be born with any deformity, he would be held responsible.

Breach of No. 2.—There is no punishment for a breach of this regulation, but it is simply "Not done."

Breach of No. 3.—A woman who is found infringing this rule is severely punished in the following way. She is tied up and severely beaten by her husband, so that her whole skin is bruised, and then sharp urine is poured over the abrasions. This acid causes very severe pain for many hours. The boy is not punished, as the fault is held to be entirely that of the woman, who should know better. In actual practice the boy is expected to bring the husband a present of honey beer in order to placate him, and so avoid being cursed with a very painful cure.

Breach of No. 4.—There is no punishment for the woman who is found to have broken this rule, nor is there actual punishment for the man, save that if his sin is discovered he is dishonoured at once by his fellow age-group members, and even if not found out at once, his dishonourable conduct will be found out at the *Enkai* ceremony (see p. 196), when his turn comes to enter the *Shingira*.

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.* 203

Break of No. 3.—A married man who breaks this regulation and is found out is ⁶⁰⁹very severely punished, the punishment being left to the women of the village, who have the right to hamstring and maim all his cattle.

Break of No. 6.—The punishment for this is as for a breach of No. 3 as far ⁶¹¹as the woman is concerned, and likewise the man must take care to the aggrieved husband to avoid a curse.

Break of No. 7.—A man who breaks this regulation is held to be solely responsible, as guilt whatever attaching to the woman. As this offence (intromission with a member of one's own sub-clan) is the worst possible, the penalty is very severe indeed. Every animal the man possesses—cattle and sheep alike—is hamstring and otherwise maimed and left to die, and if the man can be caught he is so severely beaten and mutilated that he is almost certain to die too.

The Marriage Ceremony.—The usual number of animals transferred as ⁵⁷³marriage settlements are:—

- 2 Hides.
- 1 Ox.
- 1 Koe yearling.
- 1 Ram.

Also honey beer in large quantities.

Of these, the man is delighted by the mother of the bride, who is assisted with her lot.

When a girl who has married before initiation is being married by a man other than the lover who was responsible for her condition, only one buller is given (instead of the three mentioned above) at the time of the marriage, but the other two bullers must be handed over at such time as the first of her children is initiated.

PART VI.—FAMILY LIFE.

The Relation of Parents to Children.—As already indicated, a man's legal children ⁵⁷³among the Masai are—as often as not—only his by virtue of his being the husband of their mother, and quite irrespective of physical parentage. Nevertheless, fathers are very proud of their children, and take considerable interest in their welfare. They must always be present at the initiation of a son or daughter, and feel very hurt if for any reason they are prevented from doing so. When a son grows up and eventually leaves a village of his own, his father and the other men of the village who belong to his father's generation may not come and feed at the new village until one of them has been presented with a buller called *adoko* by the young man. ⁵⁷¹

593

731

601

Gifts to Certain Relations.—A somewhat similar custom is that which obtains that a grown-up son must give certain presents to all children born to his father, as follows:—

- (1) To a young girl-child, either a heifer or else a young ewe or young sheep which has not yet had young. If the former present is given the child in future calls its brother (or half-brother) *hundi*, and if either of the two latter animals is given the appropriate name is bestowed.
- (2) To a boy-child, either a heifer or a young ram or else a young ewe or sheep which has not yet had young. The following are the appropriate names by which the boy hereafterward calls the man: *shakia* if the gift was a young ewe, *kapia* if the gift was a young sheep, *adama* if the gift was a heifer, *shikama* if the gift was a young ram.

A grown-up son must also give a present to any son with married by his father, the animal given and the name thereforward used by the woman to the man being exactly as in the case of girl-children above.

604

Mother's Brother.—Among the Masai I can find no trace of any special functions of the mother's brother, and he has no special position in relation to his sister or her children.

577

607

613

613

577

577

Widowhood.—There is no idea of uncleanness attaching to widowhood, and therefore there is no ceremonial purification necessary before sexual life can be indulged in by a widow. When a woman is left a widow she builds herself a hut with one of her husband's own brothers (i.e. brothers by the same mother), and he becomes responsible for her welfare and acts as her parent to her children as far as making arrangements for initiation and marriage, etc., are concerned. In no circumstances, however, may this brother or any other of her husband's own brothers have sexual intercourse with the woman. If she is still of child-bearing age she is expected to go on having children (who will rank as her late husband's), and to this end she may have sexual relations with:—

- (1) Any man of her late husband's age-group, who are not excluded by other restrictions (see above).
- (2) Any of her late husband's half-brothers (i.e. brothers by a different mother).
- (3) Any other men not otherwise excluded.

757

Sickness.—My informant was unable to give me any detailed information about the treatment of sick people, save that medicines were made from the bark and seeds of various trees and from the stomach juices of slaughtered animals.

Part VII.—*Death and Burial.*

761

Death.—Death is looked upon with fear and, therefore—except in the case of very old men and women past child-bearing—every precaution is taken to avoid a

death taking place within the village. This means that as soon as a young or middle-aged person shows any signs of approaching death, he (or she) is hastily carried out into the bush outside the village and left to die there. 761
763

Should the death of a young or middle-aged person occur within the village, the body must be carried out and thrown into the bush. The proper person to perform this last service is a son of the deceased, but if no son is available the body must be moved by a stranger (usually a member of the Wandurcho tribe, who is always willing to perform this work), and the fee for doing so is a bull. The village must be moved as soon as possible after such an occurrence, but otherwise there is no purification ceremony. 764
765

Burial of Old People.—Only an old man, or a woman past child-bearing, is allowed to die peacefully in a hut in the village, and the body is then buried in the following way:—As soon as death occurs a ram or bullcock is slaughtered and the fat used to anoint the body and clothes (pewa skins) of the individual. All ornaments are removed, and the burying-place is then prepared as follows: A spot in the bush not far from the village is selected and cleared and a hollow square of rough logs is then built up. This structure is usually about four feet square and three feet high. On the ground inside the structure the deceased's sleeping-skin is placed, and on it the body is laid (with the knees sufficiently bent to fit the space). Men are placed lying on their right sides, women on their left. The body is then covered by the various skin dresses owned by the deceased and left, no attempt being made to cover over the top of the structure with wood or earth in order to protect the body from scavenging animals. 766

About a month after the burial has taken place the village must be moved, with the exception of the hut in which the death took place. The hut is left to fall into ruin. Meanwhile, until the move takes place, any other occupants of the hut continue to live in it as before. 767

Ceremony at the Burial place.—On the day that the village is finally abandoned every member of the village must file past the burial place and the older people stop and drink beer and slaughter an ox there. My informants, however, insist that this is not a sacrifice to the departed spirit as among some other tribes, and as proof pointed out that they did not pour out any beer at the grave or leave any offering of meat. 768

Inheritance.—A man's possessions all pass to his male children, but if they are too young to take charge of them themselves the deceased's own brother, who acts in his parents (see Widowhood) looks after the property for them. It is rare for this to be allowed to retain a very small percentage of the stock. 769

A man's personal ornaments are put on his various children about two months after his death, with a certain amount of ceremonial and much beer-drinking. His weapons are kept for his sons until such time as they shall require them.

308 L. S. B. LEAKEY.—*Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony.*

428 428 Women possess no property save their ornaments. Of these the beads and the necklaces become the property of the daughters, but the wire ornaments are thrown away.

915 916 *Spirit Life.*—My informants declared that the Masai had no belief in a spirit life after death, or in spirits of any kind, but I am not satisfied on this point. For some reason (probably a restriction with a heavy penalty attached) they were unwilling to discuss this subject.

954 954 *Curses.*—The death-bed curse is considered very terrible, as there is no possible way of escaping its evil effects, for a curse can only be removed by the person who uttered it. A man who has been cursed will use every possible means to have the curse withdrawn immediately lest the utterer of the curse should die. (A curse uttered during life is supposed often to remain inactive until the death of the utterer, and this in itself seems to indicate a belief in some sort of spirit activity.)

PART VIII.—CLANS.

614 614 The following is a list of the clans and sub-clans among the Masai (it is as nearly complete as possible):—

Main Clan Name.	Sub-clans.
No. 1. Laisur	{ (1) Laisur (2) Legetoi (3) Letoya (4) Lokumai (5) Lamothere (6) Lihartimara (7) Loige.
No. 2. Ndoroi	{ (1) Ndoroi (2) Laniogwara.
No. 3. Moidian	{ (1) Moidian (2) Mharakineti
No. 4. Mapwen	{ (1) Mapwen (2) Lowya.

PART IX.—CATTLE AND SHEEP.

833 833 As a pastoral people the Masai have many very interesting customs connected with their flocks, but information on this subject is very hard to obtain, as details of the greatest interest to anthropologists are often not given because they are considered too trifling or too well known to be worth discussion. A few interesting notes were, however, obtained.

Protecting Lost Cattle and Sheep.—If during the day cattle or sheep stray and cannot be found before nightfall, the following interesting ceremony is performed. There are certain men and women (they are not necessarily anything to do with medicine men or witch doctors), who have the power to protect straying cattle, and as soon as a herdsman discovers that some of his animals are lost and cannot be found before dark, he sends with all haste to one of these individuals. If possible the messenger should be a small boy, and he takes with him the staff that the herdsman of the lost cattle was carrying at the time. This staff is handed over to the person who is to perform the protecting ceremony, which is as follows:—The staff is taken and tied up with a leather thong removed from the "Protector's" waist, and is then placed at the head of the "Protector's" bed until the following morning. As an alternative, if there is no staff available, a cinder is taken from the fire and is placed in a cooking pot, the mouth of which is then covered with a skin dress belonging to the "Protector," and the skin dress tied down with the leather thong. In either case, while the tying is being done certain fixed formulae are uttered by the "Protector." These may be translated as follows: "I tie the hyena's mouth," "I tie the lion's mouth," "I tie the leopard's mouth," "I blind the thief's eyes," etc. Once this ceremony is performed the lost animals are considered safe from all dangerous animals and from thieves. In fact, even the owner would pass right by them and not notice them, for they have become invisible.

Next morning the animals are "released" by the "Protector" and the owner can go out and find them at once. There is no fee paid to the "Protector" for performing this ceremony, but he (or she) should be given a little snuff.

Driving Out Disease.—In the case of a serious outbreak of disease, one of the same "Protectors" is sent for to perform a "driving-out" ceremony. All the cattle and sheep of the infected village are brought together into the cattle enclosure and a ceremony called "*Chomo tumwagika*" is performed. The "Protector" selects a young bull and a young heifer of about the same size and of the same colour (these two animals must be of a single colour and not pied or spotted in any way). He also chooses a small boy and a small girl. He then instructs these two children to drive the two animals slowly right round the outside of the enclosure and back through the entrance to the cattle again. This "going round" ceremony is accompanied by appropriate sentences by the "Protector" bidding the disease depart, and the ceremony ends. The "Protector" is given beer as a fee. After such a ceremony any cattle disease is supposed to die out quickly.

Preventing Mating.—Among the Masai it is a common custom to put a special shield on to bulls to prevent indiscriminate mating. This shield consists of a square flap of leather which is fastened just behind the animals' forelegs by thongs which come up over the ribs and are tied in the region of the animal's back. This practice is especially common when cattle from several villages are being herded together during the day. Then when the cattle return in the evening to their respective

233
189

[431]

233
282

233 villages the shields are removed to allow mating to take place with the owner's
232 own cows. The same method of preventing mating is used with rams, but to a much
lower extent. If a man has several good rams he keeps shields on a few of them at
a time in order to use his rams in rotation.

233 **Blood-letting.**—Among the Masai, blood is a staple article of diet. It is either
[262] drunk hot and fresh, or cooked with bits of fat and meat into a "black-pudding,"
or else mixed with fresh milk and allowed to curdle.

In order to obtain blood every sheep and every head of cattle is bled at intervals.
Cattle are bled by one method and sheep by another. In the case of cattle, the
animal is seized and held, and a thong is then tied round its neck until the vein at
the side of the neck swells up under the pressure of the blood. The vein is then
[413] punctured by means of a special instrument which may be termed a "blood-letting
arrow." The blood-letting arrow consists of a small stocky shaft into the end of
which a small flat blade is inserted. This blade has a curved edge and is very sharp.
This arrow is used with a special bow which is always small and usually very roughly
made. The arrow is not shot from a distance, but placed against the swollen vein. The
bow string is only pulled back very slightly and when released drives the arrow just far
[415] enough to open the vein. The blood is caught in a gourd and the animal released.

Sheep are bled by a different method; the animal is held and a small incision
is made just above one eye and blood drawn off.

262 **Meat-feasts.**—Young men and old alike indulge in frequent meat-feasts, meat
527 being a staple article of diet. No men may eat meat inside the village, so meat-
feasts take place either in special huts built at a little distance from the village, or
in a cave if there is one near-by.

There are certain rules and regulations concerning meat-feasts, as follows:—

- (1) No man may eat meat that has been touched by a woman.
- (2) No Masai man may slaughter cattle himself. In every case a man of the
[331] Wamurcho tribe must be called in to kill the animal, and he must be
[523] rewarded by being given a part of a fowling.
- (3) The neck, stomach and some of the intestines are always given to the
women, who may come and fetch them. The least meat is given to the
man to whom the slaughtered animal belonged.
- (4) During a meat-feast, some at least of the fowling must sleep in the hut
or cave where the meat is, and it is usual for all to do so. If by any chance
the fire should go right out in the course of the night, it would be considered
a very serious matter indeed. In such a case no one inside the hut may
go out by the normal entrance, but must break through the walls (in
the case of a cave they must break through the brushwood screen which is
inevitably built across part of the entrance to the mouth of the cave), and
all the meat that is left over must be discarded and left to the hyenas. The
breaking of this rule is said to result invariably in the death of the offender.

L. S. B. LEAKEY.—Some Notes on the Masai of Kenya Colony. 209

Milking.—Milking is usually done by women and girls, but uninitiated boys may also milk. Milk is either drunk fresh or is curdled by mixing with blood, or is curdled alone by leaving for two or three days. 234
462
252

Raiding.—Frequent raids on neighbouring tribes are carried out by the warrior 721
clans, and the cattle and sheep so obtained are some of them distributed to a warrior's parents and friends and some kept for himself. When cattle are raided from another clan or sub-clan in order to repay a murder (see Murder), all unimpaired, blind, and otherwise damaged cattle are returned immediately afterwards, for to keep these would certainly bring bad luck on the raiders. [682]
[777]

PART X.—Miscellaneous Notes.

Fire.—Fire for special occasions is made by means of the hand-drill method, and 372
women may not make fire by this means. Normally, fire is obtained from the ashes of the previous day's fire or from a fire live made borrowed from a neighbouring hut. The first fire in all new huts must be made with fire-sticks.

Murder.—Should a man kill a member of his own sub-clan there is no punishment. What would be the use of taking a fine from one's own sub-clan? If, however, a man of another sub-clan is killed, then the sub-clan of the murdered man raid the murderer's sub-clan and try to win cattle in compensation. Usually a free fight takes place and if, in the course of this, a man of the murderer's sub-clan is killed, the matter is considered all square, and any raided cattle are returned. In the course of such a raid all sorts of cattle are driven off, but all the blind and maimed ones are returned next morning (see Raiding, above). 682

Smiths.—Among the Masai smiths are considered "bad." These are smiths in each clan, and the business is purely a family one handed down from father to son. Young boys of smiths' families are initiated alone, and some initiated go straight to the business of smithing and may take no part in the life of the ordinary warrior or warrior. Smiths are considered to be considerably lower in the social scale than even the Wandorobis. A Wandorobi can leave his hunting life and rank as a true Masai if he so chooses, but never a smith. 326
564

If a smith comes and sleeps at a village he is given a bed, but must sleep on the wrong side of the sleeping hide (i.e. the rough back side). Smiths may only marry with smiths' families. No Masai would dream of marrying or having any kind of sexual intercourse with a smith's daughter (Wandorobi girls may be married by Masai, but not vice versa), nor can a smith marry an ordinary Masai girl. Smiths make spears and small knives, cattle bells and iron ornaments, but never swords which are always bought from the Kilgips. Should a Masai buy the cattle or sheep of a smith he must dip them in the river before adding them to his flock. [594]
[583]
[563]
[411]
[438]